

# Director Parker Speaks out at the Mackinac Policy Conference

The weekend of June 4, 2004, the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce held its annual Mackinac Policy Conference on Mackinac Island. The Conference was well attended by about 1700 state and local civic and business leaders gathered to discuss the economic revitalization of southeast Michigan. For the first time, the conference also featured a dialog on race relations including our very own Director Parker as a panelist. The panel was titled, "Bridging the Racial Divide: A Business Imperative." Panel members explored the economic reasons for the frank discussion of race and solutions to racial antagonisms in southeast Michigan. Other panelists included: Ismael Ahmed, Executive Director, ACCESS; Daniel Krichbaum, Executive Director, NCCJ; Armando Ojeda, Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; John Rakolta, Chairman & C.E.O, Walbridge Aldinger; Shirley Stancato, President, New Detroit and Heaster Wheeler, Executive Director, NAACP-Detroit. In addition to the panel, Director Parker was also featured in several media interviews during the conference including a live interview on Michigan Talk Radio Network's Morning Show with Dave Scott and Lurel Hess and an interview following the panel discussion by Darchelle Strickland Love of Detroit Channel 10's Politics Aside. In the coming months MDCR will be combining its continued endeavors with the momentum generated by the Mackinac conference attendees' willingness to discuss race relations. Below are links to articles in the news and more information referencing the panel:

<http://wjv.com/article.asp?id=27403&pt=local+news>  
[http://www.freep.com/features/living/riley9\\_20040609.htm](http://www.freep.com/features/living/riley9_20040609.htm)

**Detroit Chamber website on the Mackinac**

Conference: <http://www.detroitchamber.com/MPC/>